

**Virginia Scenic River Advisory Board
Thursday, April 19, 2007
Appomattox Regional Library
Hopewell, Virginia**

Virginia Scenic River Advisory Board Members Present

Richard G. Gibbons, Chair
Amanda Macaulay
Edward Mullen
K. Wayne Walton

Patricia A. Jackson, Vice Chair
Joseph H. Maroon
Mary Lily Nuckols

Virginia Scenic River Advisory Board Members Not Present

Henry R. Broaddus
Ralph Hambrick
Ralph Moore
Christopher Rivers

Robert G. Harrison
Mark R. Merhige
Cardell Patillo
P.T. Taylor, Jr.

DCR Staff Present

Lynn Crump, Environmental Programs Planner
John R. Davy, Director, Division of Planning and Recreation Resources
Michael R. Fletcher, Board and Constituent Services Liaison

Others Present

Fred Fisher

Call to Order

Chairman Gibbons called the meeting to order. There was not a quorum.

Mr. Gibbons asked for a moment of silence in sympathy and in memory of the victims, students and family of the Virginia Tech shootings.

Approval of Minutes of December 8, 2006

As there was no quorum, no action was taken regarding the minutes of December 8, 2006.

Chairman's Report

Chairman Gibbons gave the Chairman's Report. He said that he had been attending the James River Advisory Council (JRAC) meetings. Issues for the Council are viewsheds, river access and development along the river, including Rocket Landing and the Lehigh

Property. JRAC is also concerned about signage, particularly the billboard on Mayo Island in Richmond

JRAC has been working with DEQ concerning the large amount of foam that periodically appears on the James River in downtown Richmond.

Mr. Gibbons distributed copies of the James River Days brochure that lists activities taking place in the watershed through the end of the year. Copies of the brochure are available from the James River Advisory Council.

Mr. Gibbons noted the upcoming James River Sojourn, an educational and cleanup activity sponsored by the Alliance for the Chesapeake Bay. He also said that the 16th Annual National River Clean Up week is June 2-10, 2007.

Mr. Gibbons said that he attended a book signing and lecture by Bob Deans on new book *The River Where America Began* the history of the James in anecdotal fashion.

Mr. Gibbons said that Sylvia Brugh, a long time river activist and former chair of the Upper James Scenic River Advisory Board had passed away. Mr. Gibbons will write a letter on behalf of the Board.

Director's Report

Mr. Maroon gave the Director's report. He noted that much is happening within the Department on such issues as water quality improvement, land conservation, dam safety and floodplain management, state parks, natural heritage and more.

Mr. Maroon noted that at the last meeting the Board had been briefed regarding Jamestown and the John Smith Water Trail. He said that there were several other Jamestown related events of note.

On March 30, Mr. Maroon participated in the launching of the replica of John Smith's shallop. Governor Kaine attended this event that took place at Nauticus in Norfolk. The shallop crew will recreate John Smith's journey in the Bay region.

Mr. Maroon noted that DCR continues to work on the York River portion of the John Smith Water Trail.

Mr. Davy said that staff hopes to have that project complete in June.

Mr. Maroon said that on April 26th, DCR would host the first 400th Anniversary signature event at First Landing State Park in Virginia Beach. The event will be a reenactment of the landing of the Virginia Company at Cape Henry. About 2,500 people are expected at each of the two presentations.

Mr. Maroon said that the legislation regarding the extension of the Goose Creek Scenic River designation passed overwhelmingly. A request has been made to the Governor's

Office regarding a signing ceremony and DCR is working with Goose Creek Scenic River Advisory Committee Chair Helen Casey to schedule an event.

Mr. Maroon said that HJ709 directs the Department to study the Mayo River in Henry County for the feasibility of establishing a state park and for scenic river designation.

Mr. Maroon said that DCR is engaged two targeted ad campaigns with regard to water quality.

The first campaign is a farm conservation awareness pilot program launched in the Valley Region. The intent of the campaign is to encourage farmers to work with their local Soil and Water Conservation Districts to make use of state and federal cost share funds available for implementing agricultural conservation practices. The campaign hopes to make the connection that conservation is beneficial from an economic standpoint.

The second campaign is a program that ran previously in Northern Virginia. The "Chesapeake Club" has been recently launched in Richmond and Hampton Roads. The campaign uses humor to make the connection between individual lawn care and the health of local rivers and streams and the organisms that rely on them.

Mr. Maroon distributed two brochures regarding Land Conservation and Land Conservation Tax Credits in Virginia. He said that DCR has a major role in helping the Governor reach his goal to preserve an additional 400,000 acres of land before 2010.

Mr. Maroon said that DCR received substantially less in funding than the Governor had proposed. DCR received about \$25 million less than the Governor had allocated in his budget.

The proposed \$13.7 million for the Virginia Land Conservation Foundation was reduced to \$1 million. The Water Quality Improvement Fund went from \$7.5 million to \$3.7 million, and capital funding for State Parks went from \$15 million to \$5 million with an additional one million for High Bridge State Park.

Mr. Maroon said that the Environment Virginia Conference in Lexington, participants heard from Richard Louv, author of "Last Child in the Woods." The book notes that today's children are disconnected from the outdoors. There is a concern and a growing movement to offer educational opportunities for children.

Update on resolutions from last meeting

Mr. Gibbons gave an update regarding Board actions from the December meeting.

A copy of the letter to Mayor Wilder regarding the Mayo Island sign was provided in member packets.

Also provided was a copy of House Joint Resolution 658 regarding the “panoramic view of the James River from Libby Hill in Richmond, Virginia.”

Update on River designations

Mr. Davy gave an update regarding river designations.

Mr. Davy said that, as noted in the Director’s report, the extension of Goose Creek had been approved. He said that each of the last two years there has been a new river or section brought into the Scenic River System.

Mr. Davy said there remains considerable interest in the New River. The Wild and Scenic designation is still being considered for the section between Glen Lynn, Virginia in Giles County and the section closer to the Bluestone Reservoir in West Virginia. The West Virginia Department of Natural Resources continues to express concerns regarding National Park Service management of lands in West Virginia.

Mr. Davy noted that Mr. Maroon also mentioned the study of the North and South forks of the Mayo River. DCR is looking at these at the direction of the General Assembly. Mr. Davy has met with concerned landowners. He worked with the Dan River Association to meet with about 25 landowners. He had the opportunity to explain the process of the study. He said that he was clear to point out to the landowners that DCR will only deal with willing sellers.

Mr. Davy said the report would be divided into two separate studies and will be sent to the General Assembly in the fall.

Mr. Maroon noted that this was a situation where Henry County provided the funds for the study.

Mr. Davy said there has been interest in looking at the Jordan River in Rappahannock County as well as the Blackwater River in Isle of Wight County. There has also been recent information provided regarding the Tye and the North Fork of the Shenandoah River.

Mr. Davy gave an update regarding the John Smith Trail. He noted that the final signage would be in place within the next week and the project will be completely finished. He said the signage for the Trail had been nominated for an award.

The York River portion of the John Smith Water Trail will include the York, Mattoponi and Pamunkey Rivers. The maps and information are undergoing final review.

Mr. Gibbons commended the Division and the Department for the work on these projects.

Mr. Gibbons asked when the Mayo River evaluation would take place.

Mr. Davy said it would likely be late May or early June and noted that the Department would notify Board members in the event any wished to participate in the evaluation.

Goose Creek Celebration

Mr. Maroon said that, at this time, he did not have many details regarding this event. DCR is working with the Governor's office as well as Helen Casey to schedule an event.

Suggested location for the event is a store in an historic district in Delaplane.

Mr. Maroon said that at a future date, he would like the Board to discuss whether there should be a separate Scenic River Advisory Committee for this new section of Goose Creek. He said recommendations have been that there be two committees based on County jurisdiction.

Falls of the James Report

Mr. Gibbons noted that the Falls of the James committee was meeting at the same time as the Scenic River Board. He said that items of discussion for the committee were the sign on Mayo Island and the removal of the Lehigh cement plant.

Scenic Virginia Award

Mr. Gibbons said that the Board has been encouraged to resubmit the Goose Creek Scenic River Advisory Committee for the Scenic River award again. The committee has worked to extend the designation by 22 miles.

Mr. Gibbons said that Goose Creek could move from receiving an Honorable Mention last year to receiving the top award.

MOTION: Ms. Jackson moved that the Virginia Scenic River Advisory Board resubmit the nomination of the Goose Creek Scenic River Advisory Committee for the Scenic Virginia Award.

SECOND: Ms. McCauley

DISCUSSION: None

VOTE: Motion carried unanimously

Virginia Outdoors Plan Update

Mr. Davy noted that the Board had been given a thorough presentation regarding the Virginia Outdoors Plan at the previous meeting.

He said that at this point the appendices were complete and edited. Final work is being completed on the recommendations section. The hope is to have the plan completed and available by July.

Discussion of how Scenic River Board relates to other organizations

Mr. Gibbons said that the Board had previously discussed the identifications of other river organizations and the desire to meet with them to share information.

He noted that DCR had compiled a list of river related organizations. A copy of that list was provided in member packets and is available from DCR.

Ms. Crump said that this information would be included in each planning district chapter in the Virginia Outdoors Plan.

Members were encouraged to review the list and provide comments or suggestions to Ms. Crump.

Mr. Gibbons welcomed Fred Fisher. He noted that Mr. Fisher was a longtime advocate for conservation in Virginia and has served as the Attorney General representative to the Virginia Outdoors Foundation.

Mr. Fisher owns and resides at Westover Plantation. Mr. Gibbons noted that the initial intent had been to visit the plantation on the afternoon tour, but that would need to be delayed until a different time.

River Evaluation Training

Ms. Crump provided an overview of the River Evaluation Training. She noted that Board members would be taking a boat cruise on the James and Appomattox Rivers that afternoon for the purpose of a practical demonstration of a river evaluation.

A copy of the training and evaluation materials is available from DCR.

Ms. Crump said that what the evaluation process entailed is a validation of what was visible from the topological map. She said the evaluation purpose was to look at water quality from an aesthetic and not a chemical perspective.

At the adjournment of the meeting members would depart for Jordan Point Marina for the on river evaluation training.

New Business

There was no new business.

Public Comment

There was no public comment.

Next Meeting

Dates considered for the next meeting were October 11 or October 18. Staff will review these dates with other members and a final decision will be made.

Adjourn Business Meeting

The business meeting was adjourned.

Respectfully submitted,

Richard G. Gibbons
Chair

Joseph H. Maroon
Director